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ABSTRACT

This Speaker's Task Force on Arts Education report indicates that arts programs in California schools are on the decline. A drop in student enrollment in the arts and school expenditures for the arts is exacerbated by budget crises that result in cuts to existing art programs. Although a general lack of comprehensive and integrated arts education programs has fostered a rise in community-developed programs in some areas, poorer districts have little access to visual and performing arts classes or programs. The Task Force presents four goals for visual and performing arts education in California: (1) Every student should have equal access to instruction in the visual and performing arts, grades K-12; (2) Students should be required to have instruction and experience in both elementary and high school; (3) California should assure that districts have funds from all sources in amounts that provide students with access to instruction and experiences in the visual and performing arts; and (4) The quality of visual and performing arts programs in terms of teacher qualifications and subject content should be equal to instruction in other basis subject areas. To achieve these goals the task force offers recommendations for legislative review and action which include: (1) stipulation that arts education be a required course of study of all students from kindergarten through secondary level; (2) elimination of the option of pursuing other subject matters in lieu of art education; (3) establishment of a State Department of Education Council on Arts Education; (4) mandating local school districts to work with the state to develop and implement a plan for a comprehensive and balanced visual and performing arts education program; (5) directing a review of expenditures for visual and performing arts education and comparing these expenditures with other core subject areas; (6) directing a review of teacher preparation at the postsecondary level to examine preparation for art teaching and requiring arts education as credentialing requirement for all teachers; (7) allocating resources to strengthen community-based arts resources; and (8) acknowledging course study, grades, and achievement in arts education as a qualifying factor in admissions requirements to the University of California and California State University. (MM)

ED 380 388

Visual and Performing Arts

Restoring the Balance

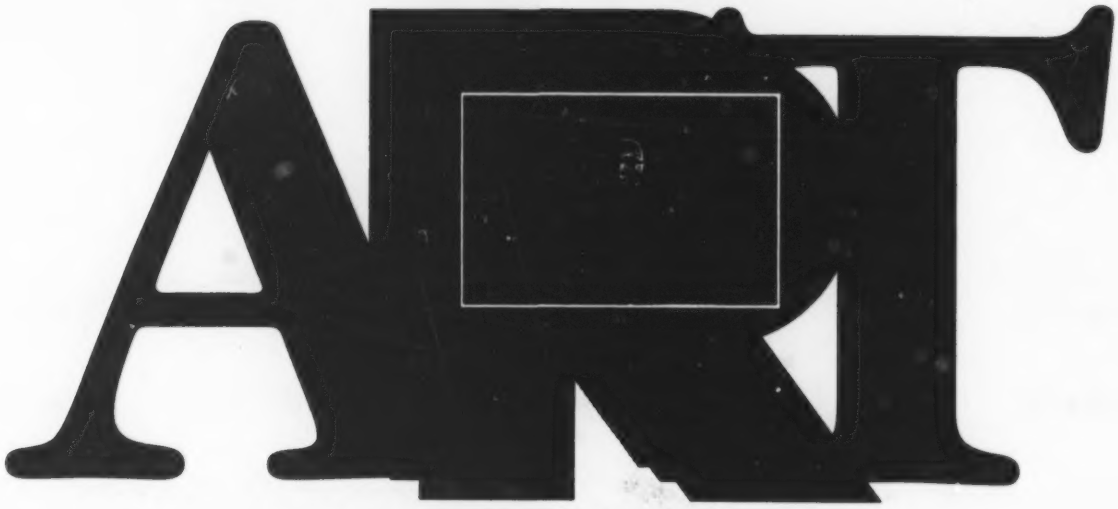

Photo: A student at the Visual and Performing Arts Centre at Sacramento High School shows ART is an integral part of the 3 R's.

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Speaker's Task Force on Arts Education
Assemblymember Sam Farr, Chairman

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May 1990

California is home to the nation's greatest number of high technology companies, scientists, and engineers. This state is also home to the largest concentration of artists, performers, and arts organizations. While we require instruction in the traditional basic subjects, math, reading, writing and science, we do not require some study of the arts of high school students, as is done in other states. Instead, we make the study of the arts optional, and allow students to meet graduation requirements with other courses.

Despite the recent reforms in the California educational system, we continue to question the quality of our education, its curriculum, and the depth of knowledge and skills acquired by our students. While we debate the quality of education in this state, we must not lose sight of its principal goal: that education must provide a balanced and comprehensive repertoire of skills and abilities.

In response to this concern, we offer an approach which we believe will help stimulate the development of a more balanced educational program and ultimately will help our children become more productive and responsible citizens. In this report, ***Visual and Performing Arts: Restoring the Balance***, we suggest that our singular emphasis on the traditional basic subjects does not give our children the benefit of a complete and balanced education.

If we are to continue to advance and improve our society so that it becomes more literate and able to maintain California's preeminence in the fields of science and technology and also what has become our trademark — creativity and the arts — we must redouble our efforts to include the visual and performing arts as one of the core subject areas in our educational programs. Without arts education, our students will continue to be deprived of opportunities to fully appreciate the aesthetics of science, the creativity of mathematics, and the magic of computer technology.

I am pleased to have chaired the Speaker's Task Force on Arts Education, formed pursuant to a measure I authored during the 1987-88 Legislative Session (HR 15), and I am deeply indebted to the individuals who served with me. Without the dedication and commitment of these outstanding and highly creative individuals, the work of the Task Force could not have been completed. This report, its goals and recommendations, embodies our hopes for a comprehensive education curriculum in California, which includes as an integral part, instruction in the arts.

Sam Farr

SAM FARR, MEMBER
28th Assembly District
Chair, Speaker's Task Force on Arts Education

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"Art and the encouragement of art is political in the most profound sense, not as a weapon in the struggle, but as an instrument of understanding of the futility of struggle between those who share man's faith. Aeschylus and Plato are remembered today long after the triumphs of imperial Athens are gone. Dante outlived the ambitions of 13th-century Florence. Goethe stands serenely above the politics of Germany and I am certain that after the dust of centuries has passed over our cities, we too will be remembered not for the victories or defeats in battle or politics, but for our contribution to the human spirit . . . ."

President John F. Kennedy
Remarks, November 29, 1962
Natural Cultural Center
National Guard Armory

INTRODUCTION

In the continuous effort to maintain a democratic society, we must ensure that our schools teach our children what they need to know about themselves, their communities, and their world. Schools must provide and enhance knowledge of social and cultural relationships, and not just because these living skills are vitally important for a productive adulthood. Children should be able to retain the ability to dream about possibilities and acquire the skills to realize those dreams.

For two decades educational reform has emphasized improvements in teaching what has been characterized as traditional basic subjects: math, reading, writing, and science. These reforms have sought to better prepare our children to live and work in an increasingly complex and technological world.

Despite the reforms, the concerns that drove them have not been resolved. Many now question whether the disappearance of visual and performing arts education in our schools is another reason that our educational system still fails to prepare children for adult life. It appears that our concentration on improving fundamental education has caused us to neglect the arts, weakening the very heart of curriculum.

This report is an exploration of arts education as a solution to the dilemma of designing a contemporary curricula. It will suggest that the current emphasis on traditional basic subjects does not provide a complete and balanced education. Visual and performing arts education programs prepare people to think and act creatively, weigh alternatives, and make independent decisions.

Our intent is to offer an approach which will stimulate the development of a more balanced educational program: a program designed specifically to help our children become more productive and responsible citizens.

"First, that the arts represent the highest human achievements to which students should have access. Second, that the school is the primary public institution that can make that access possible for the vast majority of students in our nation. Third, that work in the arts develops unique and important mental skills. It is tempting to reduce the possibilities of education to simple aspiration, to simplify complex problems so that they seem amenable to quick solutions, to embrace images of schooling that harken back to simpler, more rose-colored times. But such visions of the past are inadequate educational fare for the present. The so-called basics — the three "R's" — were never adequate in the education of free men and women. They are even less adequate today."

Beyond Creating: The Place for Art in America's Schools
Eliot Eisner, Professor of Education, Stanford University

THE CHALLENGE

A basic responsibility that vests in the Legislature is determining the state's educational policy. This task is to determine the depth and scope of education our children need to be successful in life. The Legislature faces numerous policy decisions as California moves toward the 21st century. These decisions, made during the next several years, will shape the future of every Californian and the communities in which we live.

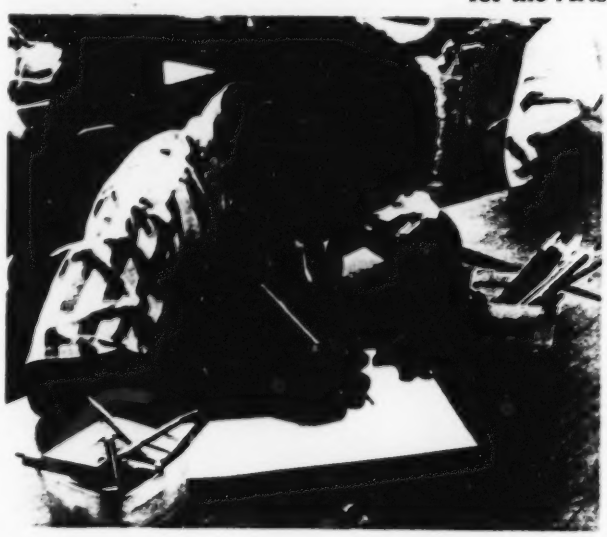
The charge of the Speaker's Task Force on Arts Education was to examine the status of education in the visual and performing arts in California's K-12 public educational institutions. Visual and performing arts education is the study of dance, music, drama/theater, and visual art. It is a discrete curriculum which provides an opportunity for students to learn art history, experience personal creative expression, develop aesthetic perception, and critical judgment.

The Task Force reviewed the literature in this field, held numerous meetings throughout the state to hear testimony about current issues in arts education, and visited innovative school programs. Having completed this aspect of the Task Force's assignment, it is the purpose of this report to present the Task Force's findings to the Legislature, provide the rationale for increasing visual and performing arts as part of California's curriculum, and define a plan for its implementation.

Our renewed sense of concern about our educational system has stimulated an era of educational reform and change. As we strive to adapt to continuous changes in our society and the world, we find ourselves changing the emphasis of our educational system in reaction to events, often by emphasizing one subject over another. Much attention has been focused on strengthening curricula, particularly in math, science, reading, and writing, as well as improving teaching methods and teacher compensation.

When local school boards face resource allocation decisions, it has too often been the case that they have chosen to reduce or completely eliminate programs in the visual and performing arts. When recently faced with a potential budget deficit, the Oakland Unified School District decided to reduce music and arts programs throughout the district. Regrettably, this reflects decisions made by other school districts throughout California. Rather than continue this pendulum-swing approach to education, this Task Force suggests that education must return to teaching the complete basics, including visual and performing arts.

> *"Basic arts education aims to provide all students, not only the gifted and talented, with knowledge of, and skills in, the arts. Basic arts education must give students the essence of our civilization, the civilizations which have contributed to ours, and the more distant civilizations which enrich world civilization as a whole. It must also give students tools for creating, for communicating and understanding others' communications, and for making informed and critical choices."*
>
> **Toward Civilization**
> The National Endowment
> for the Arts



NATIONAL

In 1977, the American Council for the Arts in Education (ACAE) convened a national panel representing sectors of the American public: the arts, education, mass communications, labor, government, and philanthropy. The panel produced a significant and respected report, ***Coming to Our Senses: The Significance of the Arts for American Education***. The panel, chaired by David Rockefeller, Jr., called for including the arts as one of the basics in education. ***Coming to Our Senses*** made an eloquent case for including arts in educational programs. Proper education, in the opinion of this panel, consists of:

1. The acquisition of knowledge, skills, and the power to reason.
2. The development of critical faculties and moral judgment.
3. The cultivation of creative potential.
4. The promotion of self-knowledge and effective interaction.

Coming To Our Senses stated that arts education is as critical a subject matter for study as mathematics, science, physical education, literature, history, or social studies. In support of this statement, the report proposed three major principles:

1. The fundamental goals of American education can be realized only when the arts become central to the individual's learning experience, in or out of school and at every stage of life.

2. Educators at all levels must adopt the arts as a basic component of the curriculum deserving parity with all other elements.

3. School programs in the arts should draw heavily upon all available resources in the community: the artists, the materials, the media, and the total environment; both natural and man-made.

This report successfully stimulated some action and reform. In fact, due to this report and other efforts, there was an increased funding of arts education from both the private and public sectors: in 1978, in reauthorizing the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), Congress specifically stipulated that "the arts should be an essential and vital component of every student's education."

Program and financial support for arts education was based on a general recognition that the arts in education:

- ***is fundamental to a complete education.***
- ***develops nonverbal thinking skills — perception, image forming ability, and imagination.***
- ***helps us create freely.***
- ***builds self-discipline and mastery of emotion.***
- ***fosters an appreciation of our living heritage, from ancient to modern cultures.***
- ***teaches aesthetic literacy.***
- ***supplements other basic skills; necessary communication skills for language, critical thinking, and logical mathematical thinking are developed and motivated through the arts.***
- ***cultivates social skills and social knowledge.***
- ***is vital for developing personal expression and growth.***
- ***uiltimately enhances the enjoyment of education and the arts and life itself.***

In 1983, the College Board issued another report, ***Academic Preparation for College: What Students Need To Know And Be Able To Do,*** which reaffirmed the need to include a comprehensive program of arts education in the schools. The College Board identified the arts as "one of the six basic academic subjects" that all high school students should know in order to succeed in college. The Board stated:

"Preparation in the arts will be valuable to college entrants whatever their intended field of study. The actual practice of the arts can engage the imagination, foster flexible ways of thinking, develop disciplined efforts, and build self-confidence. Appreciation of the arts is integral to the understanding of other cultures sought in the study of foreign languages, and social sciences. Preparation in the arts will also enable college students to engage in and profit from advanced study, performance, and studio work in the arts. For some, such college-level work will lead to careers in the arts. For many others, it will permanently enhance the quality of their lives, whether they continue artistic activity as an avocation or appreciation of the arts as observers and members of audiences."

In 1985, Congress requested the National Endowment for the Arts, in cooperation with the Secretary of Education, to study: (a) the state of arts education currently taught in the public elementary and secondary schools in the United States, and (b) the current and future availability of qualified instructional personnel dedicated to quality education in the arts.

In late 1988, the National Endowment for the Arts released the results in a report called ***Towards Civilization,*** which once again reiterated the need to include arts education in this nation's school programs. The National Endowment for the Arts defined basic arts education to include the disciplines of literature, visual imagery and design, performing art, and media art.

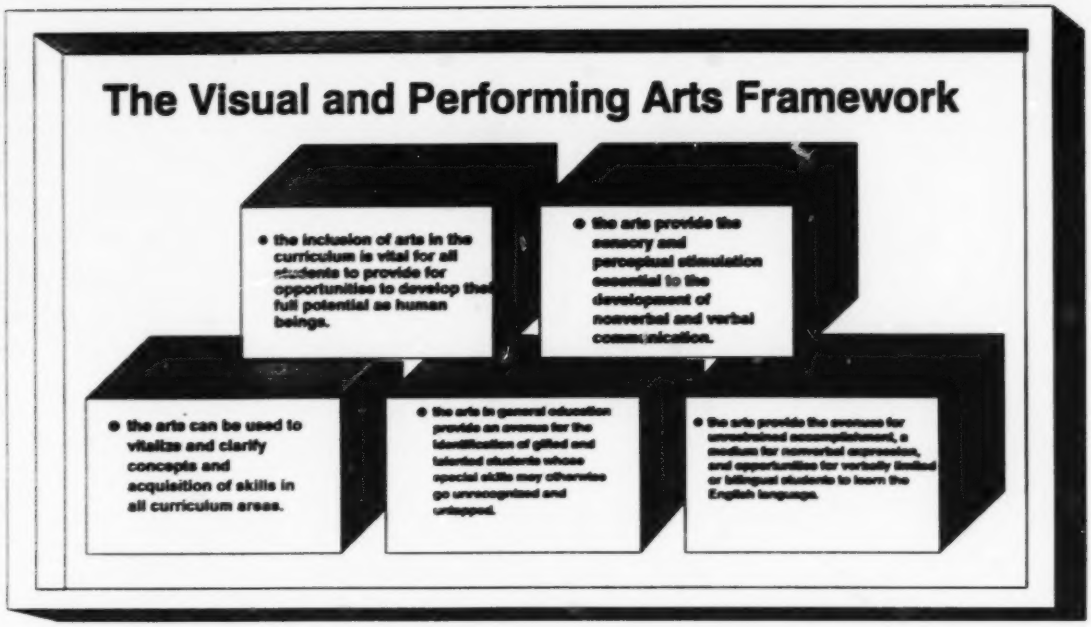
Towards Civilization states:

"We have found a gap between commitment and resources for arts education and the actual practice of arts education in classrooms. Resources are being provided, but they are not being used to give opportunities for all, or even most, students to become culturally literate. The arts are in general not being taught sequentially. Students of the arts are not being evaluated. Many arts teachers are not prepared to teach history and critical analysis of the arts. This condition of arts education is no worse now than it has been. The vast majority of today's adults say they had no real education in the arts when they were in school. Then as now, resources for arts education were used primarily to produce performances and exhibitions by talented and interested students for the enjoyment of parents and the community. They are not being used to help young people move toward civilization. This is a tragedy, for the individual and the nation."

STATE

In 1980 the California Legislature enacted the Exemplary Arts Program. When funds were made available through this legislation, districts were quick to develop new efforts in the arts. However, an ensuing yearly budget crisis resulted in school boards and administrators cutting these new programs. At one time, California had over 400 art consultants in its schools; today, only a handful remain. Los Angeles Unified, for example, employs only a few consultants to work with more than 600,000 students.

The Educational Reform Act (SB 813, Chapter 498, Statutes of 1983), curriculum increased high school graduation requirements and generally improved public education. However, these reforms did not stimulate arts education programs. The new law did encourage the development of Model Curriculum Standards.


The Visual and Performing Arts Framework
• the inclusion of arts in the curriculum is vital for all students to provide for opportunities to develop their full potential as human beings.
• the arts provide the sensory and perceptual stimulation essential to the development of nonverbal and verbal communication.
• the arts can be used to vitalize and clarify concepts and acquisition of skills in all curriculum areas.
• the arts in general education provide an avenue for the identification of gifted and talented students whose special skills may otherwise go unrecognized and untapped.
• the arts provide the avenues for unrestrained accomplishment, a medium for nonverbal expression, and opportunities for verbally limited or bilingual students to learn the English language.

Although these curriculum standards are generally considered excellent resource documents for arts education, these materials are not often used by school districts, so the goal of a more integrated educational curriculum has not been achieved.

The curriculum framework developed for arts education by the State Department of Education, ***The Visual and Performing Arts Framework***, defined the visual and performing arts as those areas of study related to dance, music, drama/-theater, and the visual arts. The framework asserts that fundamental relationships exist among subject areas. Based on this premise, the Department of Education recognizes that:

- ***the inclusion of arts in the curriculum is vital for all students to provide for opportunities to develop their full potential as human beings.***
- ***the arts provide the sensory and perceptual stimulation essential to the development of nonverbal and verbal communication.***
- ***the arts can be used to vitalize and clarify concepts and acquisition of skills in all curriculum areas.***
- ***the arts in general education provide an avenue for the identification of gifted and talented students whose special skills may otherwise go unrecognized, and untapped.***
- ***the arts provide the avenues for unrestrained accomplishment, a medium for nonverbal expression, and opportunities for verbally limited or bilingual students to learn the English language.***

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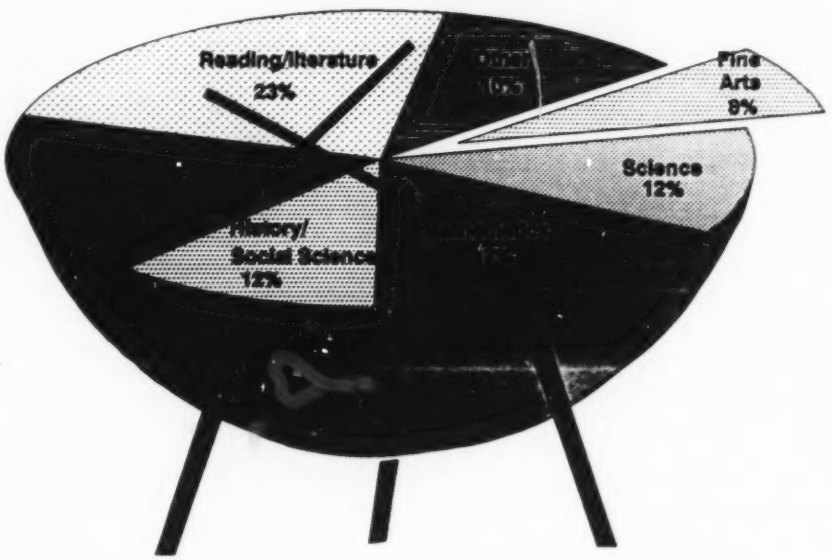
As stated in the framework, the State Department of Education found that study of each of the arts contributes to a student's ability to understand their world:

"Each of the arts provides a language for the communication of ideas and emotions. Understanding the language enables one to appreciate what others are saying; being fluent in that language enables one to say things of value to others."

INSTRUCTIONAL TIME PER WEEK IN CALIFORNIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

CORE SUBJECTS AND FINE ARTS

GRADES 2,4,6 – 1986-87



Source: Arts Education in California:
Thriving or Surviving?
Assembly Office of Research, January 1989

Graphic by Brian Uslan,
Joint Rules Committee

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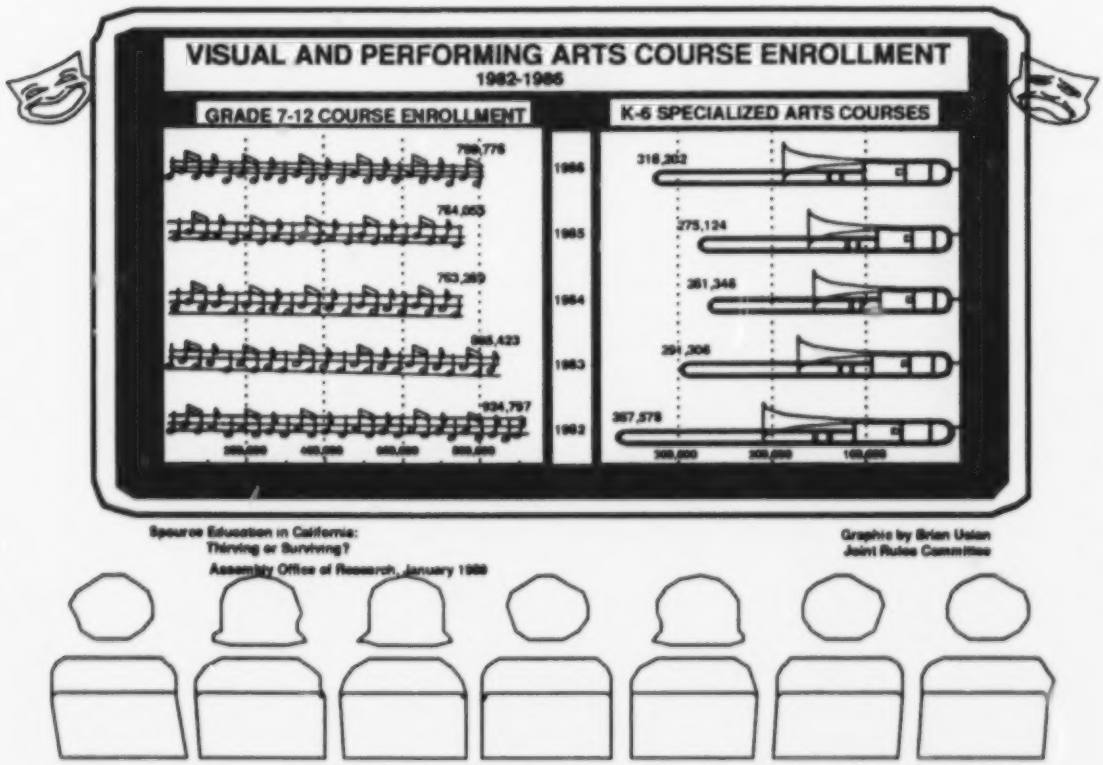
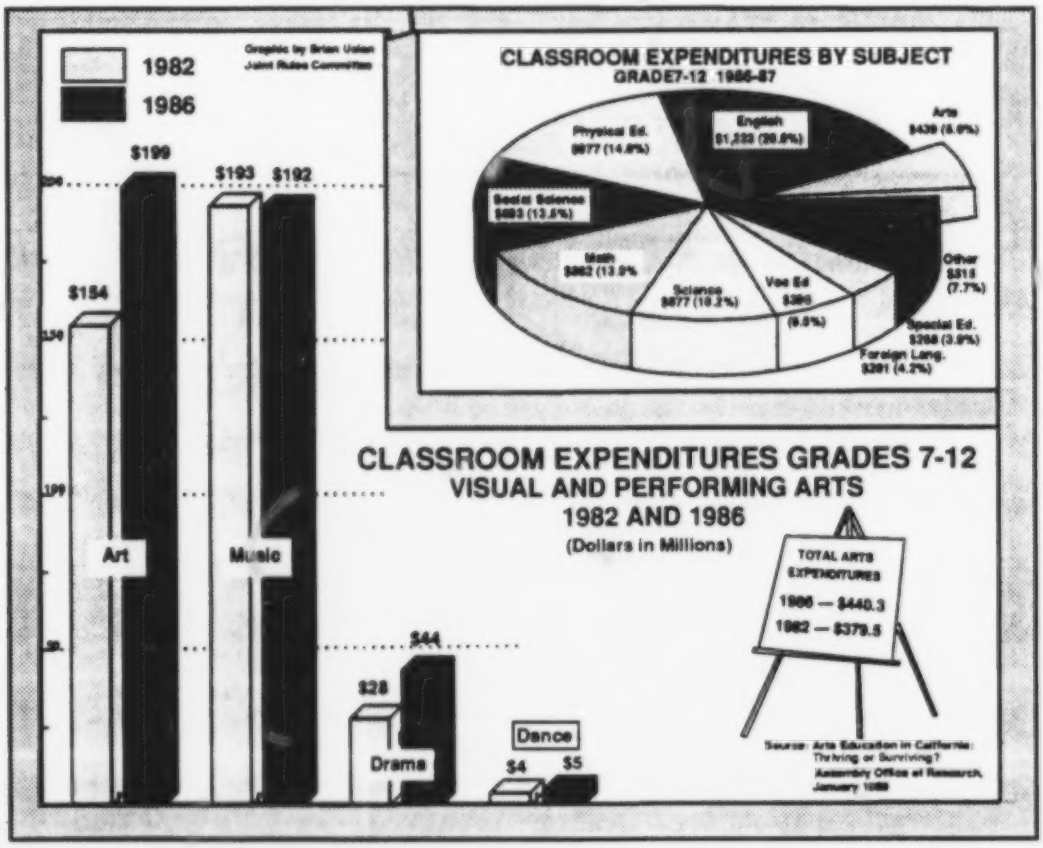
The Assembly Office of Research (AOR) reported in its study of the visual and performing arts, ***Arts Education in California: Thriving or Surviving***, that students enrolled in grades K-6 received an average of only 115 minutes of instruction per week in the visual and performing arts, approximately 7.59 percent of total instructional time. This statewide average in California is far less than the recommendation of the National Endowment of the Arts that at least 15 percent of the school work be devoted to arts instruction. Furthermore, AOR found that course enrollments in specialized art activities for grades K-6 decreased steadily from 1982-84 and that such enrollments remained lower in 1986-87 than in 1982-83 for grades K-6.



In grades 7-12, the picture is not better. AOR reported that art course enrollment in grades 7-12 also decreased between 1982-83 and 1986-87 by almost 14 percent. The AOR concludes:

> *"Based on the data collected and analyzed, arts education is certainly not thriving. In some school districts where there is generally high achievement, the visual and performing arts appear to be a substantive part of the educational program. In other school districts where children are not performing well, the visual and performing arts are languishing.*
>
> *California has, over the years, initiated numerous programs, explored different models, and used a variety of approaches to improve arts education. Despite these efforts, the visual and performing arts education programs has remained static and uneven. Clearly, development of consistent policies and goals, strong leadership at all levels, both state and local, and sensitive collaboration between state and local agencies can help advance arts education."*

The AOR reports that from 1982 to 1986, expenditures in math, science, English, and computer science increased substantially, while the arts budget remained unchanged at best; in many instances, the budget was decreased.



With the minimal and inconsistent government support which now exists throughout the state, the growth in some districts of visual and performing arts programs at the local level is both exceptional and heartening.

During the past 18 months, another California task force and an advisory committee have examined visual and performing arts education. The California Arts Council convened a special Task Force to examine the Artist in the Schools Program (see ***Final Report, Art Is Education***, California Arts Council Art in Education Task Force). The State Department of Education convened the Arts Education Advisory Committee on Arts Education (see ***Strengthening the Arts in California Schools: A Design for the Future***). Both groups, in their recommendations to their respective sponsors, clearly support the inclusion of the visual and performing arts as basic components of a comprehensive educational program.

"Art is perhaps humanity's most essential, most universal language. It is not a frill, but a necessary part of communication. Indeed, the quality of civilization can be measured by the breadth of the symbols used. We need words, music, dance, and the visual arts to give expression to the profound urging of the human spirit."

"Now more than ever, all people need to see clearly, hear acutely and feel sensitively through the arts. These languages are no longer simply desirable but are essential if we are to convey adequately our deepest feelings, and survive with civility and joy."

Ernest Boyer
President of the Carnegie
Foundation for the
Advancement of Teaching

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TASK FORCE OBSERVATIONS

During meetings of the Speaker's Task Force on Arts Education, testimony was offered about the value of arts education, about how arts education helped children learn other subjects and stay excited about school. The members heard about community efforts to bring arts education into the schools, special efforts to provide additional training for teachers, and individual efforts by dedicated teachers, parents, and artists to make sure that arts is a part of the curriculum. All of these efforts reinforce the role of arts education and the need to make sure that California's educational program contains a balanced arts education program.

Visual and performing arts education, possibly more than any other subject matter, conveys the aspects of a multicultural society. Virtually every recent report on education in California includes reference to the changing demographics of the state. By the year 2000, we will be a state that is truly multicultural, with a high proportion of our population Hispanic and Asian. A deliberate and conscientious effort to develop a multicultural education can use visual and performing arts to transmit knowledge and appreciation of different societies and cultures.

The Task Force believes that visual and performing arts help strengthen nonverbal thinking skills, enhance and broaden perceptions of society, and encourage unique ways of understanding the world.

The Task Force visited several school programs. One of these programs was at the Ambler Avenue Elementary School, located in Carson, California. This school, part of the Los Angeles Unified School District, has developed a balanced curriculum integrating the visual and performing arts throughout the educational program. Literature is taught with visual arts and cartoon drawing for second graders; writing and drama are combined for fifth and sixth graders; and course work for all is organized around special presentations by artists and other performers. For example, teachers organized course work in social studies and history around a visit to an exhibit called ***The Arts and Crafts Movement: Design Reform in America 1875-1920***. Students attending Ambler Avenue Elementary school experience a comprehensive program which combines the traditional basic subjects with visual and performing arts.

Unfortunately, most children in California are not enrolled in programs like Ambler's. Most students receive a minimum of instruction in the visual and performing arts, and mostly that instruction is not integrated into the regular curriculum in the state's school program.

For example, a recent article in ***The San Francisco Examiner*** describes the experiences of a high school teacher in dramatic art. Even though this teacher is part of the San Francisco Unified School District's Performing Arts High School, he nevertheless faces difficulty in generating monetary support for his program. Lewis Campbell, the director, "wears at least five hats," most of them strictly on his own time. He is a teacher, administrative director, artistic director, publicist, and chief usher. He states, "If I were coaching a football team, the work with the team would count as teaching hours, and I would be generously compensated."

The newspaper article describes Campbell's feelings that ". . . there are more kids in the arts than in athletics . . ." and that arts education needs at least the same level of support.

ARTS EDUCATION REPORT

The general lack of comprehensive and integrated arts education programs in school programs throughout the state has, to some extent, fostered the development of numerous community approaches to bring arts education to the schools. The Task Force heard about various programs throughout California; some of these are excellent programs and could serve as models for the development of other programs throughout the state.

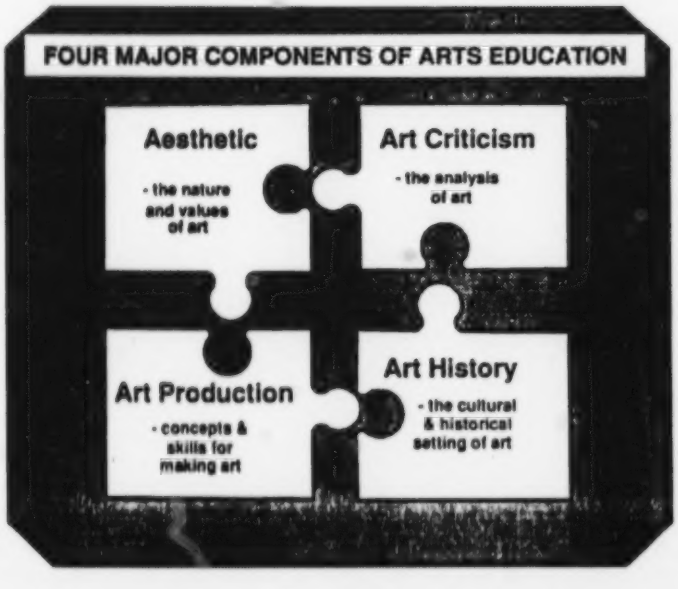
In Santa Cruz County, the local community, through the local arts council, has established an exceptional program to link local artists with the schools to enrich the program of arts education. This program, SPECTRA, involves over 90 local professional artists who provide participatory classroom workshops and performances to over 23,000 public school children in grades K-8 in all the public schools in the Santa Cruz area. The program is one of the major efforts of the local arts council and receives strong support from the school districts and the community.

The Music Center of Los Angeles County has taken another approach to the partnership of artists and educators. As one of the largest arts organizations in southern California, the Music Center, through its Education Division, uses its resources to provide a wide variety of arts education programs to schools throughout the southern California region. These programs include special performances by visiting artists, art workshops and instruction, and teacher training and curriculum development. The Music Center's programs are considered to be one of the exceptional models of an arts organization's involvement with arts education.

California is fortunate to have a major arts education resource, the Getty Center for Education in the Arts. This program focuses specifically on developing a discipline-based program in arts education. This program concentrates on the integration of four major components of arts education into the education curriculum. These components include:

Aesthetic - the nature and values of art;
Art criticism - the analysis of art;
Art history - the cultural and historical settings of art; and
Art production - concepts and skills for making art.

The Center provides resources to train teachers and curriculum implementation to assist school districts in establishing regular, districtwide programs in arts education.


FOUR MAJOR COMPONENTS OF ARTS EDUCATION
Aesthetic
- the nature and values of art
Art Criticism
- the analysis of art
Art Production
- concepts & skills for making art
Art History
- the cultural & historical setting of art

These are only a few examples of the variety of arts education programs operating throughout California. Many of these programs struggle to find the necessary resources to maintain the level of program activities, often with minimal public dollars. The existence of these programs, however, does not fill the gap. There remains a fundamental problem: the lack of an arts education curricula in the public schools. In the absence of an articulated and integrated program of arts education in the public school system, the programs mentioned above, like similar programs throughout the state, provide only a truncated version of arts education for our children. If arts education were a core component of our educational program, these special programs would then serve to enrich and enhance the basics.

Since the mid 1980's there has been a serious decline in visual and performing arts education programs in California. The Task Force heard expert after expert testify that students in local school districts have little opportunity to experience or learn about the arts.

The Task Force also learned that students attending school in districts whose educational resources and programs are relatively "rich" also usually have the most comprehensive arts programs. This means that the poorer school districts, who serve a higher proportion of students with learning problems, usually do not have access to visual and performing arts classes or programs.

We have begun to recognize that visual and performing arts is important for those students who wish to attend college. The California State University System's recently adopted admission requirements specify that entering students must have completed at least one course in the visual and performing arts. This change will probably ensure arts classes and course work for those who wish to attend college, but what about those students who will not pursue higher education? This "forgotten half" (as described in a recent editorial in ***The San Francisco Chronicle***) includes 20 million people in the United States between the ages of 16 and 24 years who are unlikely to attend college, who also need the opportunity to participate in such programs. Like athletics or other "real life" programs, the visual and performing arts is an area that "grabs" the student, often becoming the spark lighting the door to education and knowledge.

However, a lack of attention to the visual and performing arts is too often the case in California. This is due in part to the commitment of resources at both state and local levels to other subject areas. Facing public demand for better performance by schools in the traditional subject areas of math, science, and language arts, resources were committed to special efforts to improve these "basic" skills.

Faced with limited resources, school districts have sometimes abandoned arts education programs. Band and music programs have quietly disappeared. Art classes in community after-school programs supplant school programs, for those students whose parents can afford such programs. Dance instruction is provided as part of physical education, if at all.

The Task Force recognizes that education requires balance. Our concern is that as competition for state funds increases and the demand for excellence in education heightens, there must be a deliberate effort to include arts education. We have an excellent opportunity to build a solid program now because there is interest and support for the visual and performing arts. We must provide the leadership and resources necessary to strengthen this core area of the state's curriculum.

SUMMARY

"Art, no less than philosophy or science, issues a challenge to the intellect. The great works of music, sculpture, painting, engraving, and all other forms of artistic expression engage the mind, teaching lessons about order, proportion, and genius."

former Secretary of Education
William J. Bennett

One of the required areas of study specified in the California Education Code for the state's K-12-aged children is the visual and performing arts. Nevertheless, while this subject area has attracted attention during the past several years, little has been accomplished with respect to correcting the identified deficiencies. Recent debates about the quality and content of education and consideration of various improvements and reforms have invariably focused on the traditional subjects; mathematics, reading, writing, and science. Arts education programs have limped along with little or no improvement. This considered lack of attention to the visual and performing arts has resulted in fewer children receiving instruction or actively participating in the fine arts. The Task Force believes that a comprehensive approach to instruction includes the formal study of the arts and is fundamentally necessary for a complete education.

GOALS

The Task Force adopted the following four goals for visual and performing arts education in California.

GOAL 1: ALL STUDENTS SHOULD HAVE EQUAL ACCESS TO INSTRUCTION IN THE VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS, GRADES K-12

FINDINGS

1. In California, visual and performing arts is one of the required areas of study specified in the Education Code for all students, grades K-12.
2. Many children receive minimal arts instruction and that instruction is inconsistent in scope and sequence.
3. Resource commitments vary by school district, making access uneven and unequal.

The Education Code requires that visual and performing arts or fine arts is offered to all students in grades K-12. Unfortunately, the Task Force has found that many school districts continue to view arts education as a non-essential part of the curriculum; consequently, many arts programs are uneven and in some districts almost non-existent. In some districts, students receive adequate instruction in the visual and performing arts, while students in other districts have access to only minimal instruction in this subject. It is a fact that when faced with limited resources, visual and performing arts courses are often the first subject area to receive budget reductions or elimination.

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GOAL #2: STUDENTS SHOULD BE REQUIRED TO [illegible] IN BOTH ELEMENTARY AND IN HIGH SCHOOL

FINDINGS

1. A course in visual and performing arts is not required for graduation from high school but one such course is required for admission to the California State University System.

2. A balanced visual and performing arts program combines experiential learning with sequential academic training and instruction in the arts.

3. Quite often, students who do well on state assessment exams attend school in districts which also provide a balanced curriculum which includes substantial programs in the visual and performing arts.

There is a general lack of consistency in state college entrance requirements and course offerings between the elementary and secondary level. For the elementary grades, fine arts is an adopted course of study; for grades 7-12, this is also true, but the Education Code only requires that courses be offered in this subject area. To graduate from high school, students are given the option of taking one arts course or a foreign language. However, recent new admission requirements adopted by the California State University System require one course in the visual and performing arts. This lack of consistency relative to college prep course work and high school graduation requirements must be addressed.

A concise, contiguous program for the visual and performing arts is clearly needed. Adoption of a more consistent policy would require that all students experience and learn about the arts.

GOAL #3: THE STATE SHOULD ASSURE THAT DISTRICTS HAVE FUNDS FROM ALL SOURCES IN AMOUNTS THAT PROVIDE STUDENTS WITH ACCESS TO INSTRUCTION AND EXPERIENCES IN THE VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS.

FINDINGS

1. Even though visual and performing arts is one of the stated content areas adopted by the state, it has received limited attention and support from school districts and the State Department of Education.

2. Strong, balanced visual and performing arts education programs exist in districts where there is leadership and support at the local level from all elements: the board and administration, teachers, parents, and the community.

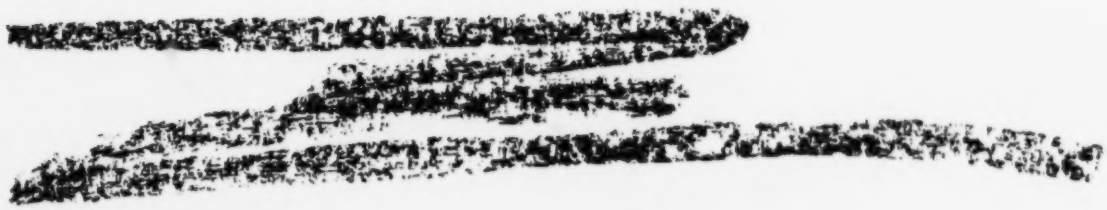
3. Use of artists in the schools provides a valuable resource for visual and performing arts instruction.

4. Use of outside resources offered by various arts organizations and institutions contributes substantially to arts education.

5. There is general support for the arts as a core subject, but the lack of resources and commitment at the state and local levels has hindered such development.

Districts often face resource problems and difficult choices in order to meet the needs of students. Some districts are able to provide a balanced educational program with a healthy arts component; other districts are able to provide only minimal programs.

As a basic content area, the visual and performing arts should receive its fair share of resource allocations. The state should ensure that every district has sufficient means to develop, implement, and support balanced visual and performing arts programs. Leadership with the ability to use these resources effectively must be present at all levels.



GOAL #4: THE QUALITY OF VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS PROGRAMS IN TERMS OF TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS AND SUBJECT CONTENT SHOULD BE EQUAL TO INSTRUCTION IN THE OTHER BASIC SUBJECT AREAS.

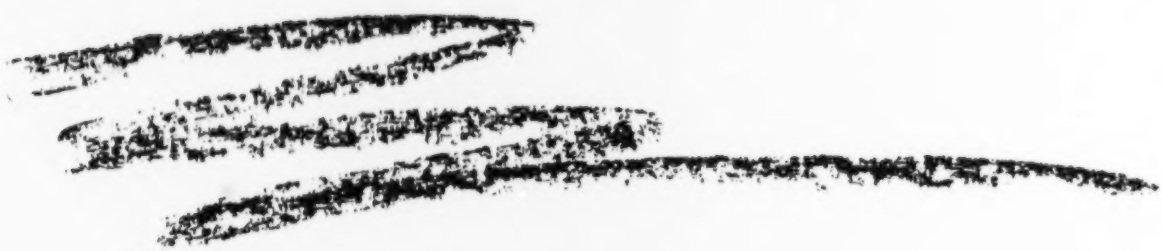
FINDINGS

1. Many teachers in grades K-6 have minimal training in the arts and, consequently, feel uncomfortable in teaching or integrating the visual and performing arts as part of the regular course work.

2. The State Department of Education has developed excellent resource materials for the arts, but many school districts fail to use these documents.

3. There are excellent arts education programs that already exist in California and the state can use these to develop similar programs on a wider scale.

   The state can promote development of a balanced and contiguous visual and performing arts program to be used by school districts. For example, if staff development in arts education is needed, curriculum resources, professional training in the arts, or other useful tools should be provided. As it has for other subject areas, such as math, science, language arts, etc., the state can and should focus attention in this subject area.



RECOMMENDATIONS

To achieve the Goals outlined in the previous section, the Task Force offers the following recommendations for legislative review.

1. Legislation should be enacted which clearly states that visual and performing arts education in a comprehensive and sequential manner is an essential required course of study for the complete education of all California students beginning in kindergarten and continuing through the secondary level.

2. The Education Code should be amended to eliminate the option afforded students to always pursue other subject matters in lieu of art education.

3. The Legislature should direct the State Department of Education to establish a Council on Arts Education comprised of educators and artists representing the four art specialties identified in ***Toward Civilization***, the report by the National Endowment for the Arts (visual and performing arts, including media art) to do all of the following:

   (a) Conduct a review and assessment of the substantive elements of visual and performing arts education programs operative in the state and make appropriate recommendations for strengthening this basic subject area.

   (b) Initiate a plan for the development and implementation of balanced visual and performing arts education programs at the local level. This plan should meet the needs of the diverse populations in California and reflect the multicultural perspectives of the state.

   (c) Submit a plan for providing staff development resources to local school districts in the area of visual and performing arts.

   (d) Investigate incentive programs which encourage the development of visual and performing arts education programs by local districts, particularly for those districts that currently have weak programs.

   (e) Investigate alternative methods of assessment for the visual and performing arts and include these methods in the plans.

4. The Legislature should mandate local school districts to work with the State Department of Education to develop and implement a plan for a comprehensive and balanced visual and performing arts education program.

5. The Legislature should direct the State Department of Education and the Legislative Analyst's Office to review expenditures for visual and performing arts education and compare these expenditures with other core subject areas.

6. The Legislature should direct the Commission on Teacher Credentialing to review teacher preparation programs at the postsecondary level, to examine whether these provide adequate preparation for teaching the visual and performing arts and then require basic education in the arts as a credentialing requirement for all teachers.

7. The Legislature should allocate resources to strengthen the use of community-based resources by schools to help provide visual and performing arts education programs.

8. The University of California should be encouraged by Legislative expression and the California State University should be required by statute to acknowledge course study, grades, and achievement in arts education as a qualifying factor in their admissions requirements.

". . . and I am certain that after the dust of centuries has passed over our cities, we too will be remembered not for the victories or defeats in battle or politics, but for our contributions to the human spirit . . . ."

President John F. Kennedy
Remarks, November 29, 1962
Natural Cultural Center
National Guard Armory

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CONCLUSION

John F. Kennedy's words still ring true today. Inevitably our society will be remembered and judged by our contributions to the human spirit. Regardless of the technological and scientific advances made in this century, what future generations will acknowledge will be the advances we make in furthering a civil society.

Education is the tool we can use to achieve these advances. Ultimately our success as a society will be judged on our ability to pass on to our children a vision of a democratic and civilized society, which by definition requires an informed citizenry. The enrichment of a visual and performing arts education helps prepare people to be citizens that can think and act creatively, weigh alternatives, and make informed decisions.

Arts education, as an essential element of education curriculum, can effectively enhance the acquisition of a lifelong love of learning. Without visual and performing arts education, we are left literally with a colorless, spiritless educational program for our children.

Thus, the members of the Speaker's Task Force believe it is time to begin restoring the balance in our educational system: we must include visual and performing arts as one of the basic components of our educational programs.

Visual and performing arts should be integrated into the curriculum at each grade level. Each of the four major disciplines can be introduced as core curriculum in the beginning grades with opportunities for specialized instruction at the secondary level. For example, in music, students might begin with basic music instruction in kindergarten, go on to chorus or other appropriate activity and proceed in each succeeding grade level to a more specialized program in music with band, choir, or orchestra in high school.

We have experienced unimagined technological and scientific advances during the 20th century. These advances have permanently changed the way we live, work, and play. We have become a mobile society, driving many miles to shop and work, flying anywhere in the world in a single day. Our communications systems allow instantaneous access to almost anyone around the planet. Yet despite advances that have vastly increased our contact with the people of our world, we often remain strangers to one another, unresponsive to our common bond; our kindred human spirit.

It is precisely this aspect of our society that we have considered in our examination of the status of visual and performing arts education in California. If there is any credible threat to the future of this great land of ours, it lies not so much in the threat of nuclear annihilation as it does in the sometimes dismal quality of curriculum we provide in our state's schools. We believe that arts education provides the balance between the technical and scientific and the social and humanistic aspects of education. Arts education helps strengthen nonverbal thinking skills; it clarifies and enhances our perceptions of our society, and provides us with a unique way of knowing the world.

Through education, we transmit our knowledge and understanding of our world to our children. Education enables our children to become full partners in our communities. During their school years, we want our children to acquire the skills to find meaningful and productive jobs, hold values that give them a sense of community, and possess insights that help them perceive their place in the continuing history of mankind.

The essence of education should be the acquisition of learning skills. We need to know and understand not only the substance and structure of our lives, but how we may continue to learn throughout our lives to use that substance and structure to lift our spirits and fulfill our souls. We can bequeath no greater legacy to our children than wings to fly and the power to do so.